

To Whom It May Concern:

Current events have clearly shown that the print media and local radio media in the United States is becoming less diverse, concentrated under the ownership of a few corporate entities, and increasingly weakened as a means of encouraging informed public debate.

Since the Telecommunications Act of 1996 we have seen clear evidence of strategic nationwide purchases of local media outlets by corporations with deep pockets. This is itself may not be illegal, but the practices of one of those corporations, Clear Channel, are rife with conflicts of interest, debasement of community interests, and documented crimes. Clear Channel, not content with abiding by FCC laws, has continually side-stepped regulation by operating through shell companies in order to control a greater percentage of local radio markets than is allowed by law. Clear Channel has also broken numerous laws by threatening the job security local management in order to change their editorial and airtime policies, by using unpaid airtime to support political candidates, and by deliberately attacking and degrading the ability of local community interests to have a voice in the media controlled by Clear Channel.

The case of Clear Channel is only symptomatic of the overall failure of the FCC to protect the media of the United States from being dominated by very few large corporate interests. As a result nearly all of the major television and cable media are controlled by merely a few corporations. The diversity and balanced presentation of facts in the media of the United States is at an all time low. On a business trip to Europe last week, the paltry ridiculous propaganda being provided by the major three U.S. cable channels (CNN, FOX, MSNBC) was a humiliating example, when compared with the broad-based coverage, diverse opinions expressed, and encouragement of rationale debate of important issues that one can find on nearly any European news station, whether they were broadcast from the UK, Germany, France, Italy, etc. Even the fact that one can at least watch Al-Jazeera network in an ordinary hotel room is evidence that Europeans expect to have access to all the available points of view available to them and make their own informed judgement about what is being reported.

In my view the FCC has the duty and obligation to protect the media from being dominated by a few selfish parties, to the detriment of informed public debate. We are living in extremely sensitive times, when it is all the more vital for Americans to take part in the debates that will shape the future of the world. But under the current stewardship of the FCC the American people are being dominated by the false, inarticulate ravings of idiots on such news outlets as FOX TV, while we are at the same time being completely deprived of informative objective news reporting. The fact that National Public Radio and Public Television stations have also become greatly pressured in their editorial policies by threats to their funding sources is equally disgusting.

In my view the FCC has failed. Miserably. The idea that the FCC is now considering allowing individual companies to own an even greater share of local media markets is not only repugnant and undemocratic, but it completely violates the core responsibilities of the FCC charter.

Do not continue to deregulate ownership in local media markets. To do so would be shameful, unlawful, and a grave error. Indeed, it is high time that the FCC reconsidered the role that it must play in controlling the unwarranted influence of a few giant media corporations over the airwaves. Not to do so will clearly demonstrate to us all that the the FCC has prostituted itself to powerful corporate interests and utterly failed to protect the core values of the

citizens of the United States, who rightfully demand a free and open media, where clearminded and objective news is reported, along with a diversity of opinions, and upon which an intelligent debate can be based.

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